in whom they had confidence and to whom they could look for protection while, on the other hand, the employers of negro labor stood in equal need of some helpful authority to give the colored people sound instruction as to their duties as free men and to lead them hack to the path of industry and good order, when, with their loose notions of the binding force of agreements, they broke their contracts or indulged themselves otherwise in unruly pranks.

To this end the " Freedmen's Bureau ” was instituted, an organization of civil officials who were, with the necessary staffs, dispersed all over the South to see to it that the freedmen had their rights, and to act as intermediaries between them and the whites. The conception was a good one, and the institution, at the head of which General O. O, Howard was put, did useful service in many instances. It would have done more, and avoided some sad and conspicuous failures, had there been greater care in the selection of agents. The duties to be performed required above all things strict integrity, sound sense, discretion and tact. Many of the men appointed possessed those qualities, but others treated the people they had to deal with, to gushes of unctuous cant which spread false notions among the blacks, irritated the whites, and not seldom caused their own honesty to be suspected. I found that in various places military officers were appealed to for advice and help by whites as well as blacks with greater

confidence than the officers of the Freedmen's Bureau,

Thus the strain of the situation was somewhat relieved by the interposition of the Federal authority between clashing elements, but by no means as much as was required to produce a feeling of security. The labor puzzle, aggravated by the race antagonism, was indeed the main disturbing influence, but not the only one. By the differences in the character of the